986/6-1

U.S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Justice Statistics

Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin

Prisoners in 1985

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June 1986

This bulletin presents the population counts for the Nation's prisons on December 31, 1985. An increase of more than 39,000 during 1985 brought the number of inmates in State and Federal prisons to more than half a million, an all-time record. The prison population has now grown for 11 consecutive years.

This report would not be possible without the assistance of the departments of correction in the 50 States and the District of Columbia and the Federal Prison System. I would like to express my appreciation for their continued support of the National Prisoner Statistics Program.

Steven R. Schlesinger
Director

The number of prisoners under the jurisdiction of Federal and State correctional authorities at yearend 1985 reached a record 503,601. The States and the District of Columbia added 33,074 prisoners, the Federal system, 5,960. The increase for 1985 brings total growth in the prison population since 1977 to more than 203,000 inmates—an increase of 68% in the 8-year period (table 1).

The 1985 growth rate (8.4%) was higher than the percentage increases recorded in either 1983 or 1984 and represents the third largest increase in the absolute number of additional inmates since prisoner statistics were first collected in 1926. Prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year (referred to as "sentenced prisoners") accounted for nearly 96% of the total prison population at the end of 1985, growing by 8.0% during the year (table 2). The remaining prisoners had sentences of a year or less or were unsentenced (those, for example, awaiting trial in States with combined prison-jail systems).

The number of sentenced Federal prisoners grew at more than twice the rate of sentenced prisoners in the States during the year (18.5% vs. 7.3%). Among the 7,528 Federal prisoners with no sentences or sentences of less than 1 year were 1,888 under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. More than 85% of the Federal increase, however, occurred among those with sentences greater than 1 year.

Women inmates composed 4.6% (23,091) of the Nation's prisoners, increasing at a slightly faster rate (10.7%) than males (8.3%). The rate of incarceration for sentenced males (394 per 100,000 males in the resident population), however, was about 23 times higher than for sentenced females (17 per 100,000 females).

Compared to 1984, the number of sentenced prisoners grew more slowly in 23 States, actually declining in 5 of these. Among the five with declines, Tennessee alone had declined in the previous year as well (11% in 1984; 5% in 1985). Conversely, three States with declines in 1984 had increases in 1985: Maine (down 2.4% in 1984, up 22.6% in 1985), Nebraska (down 1.0% in 1984, up 2.7% in 1985), and West Virginia (down 1.5% in 1984, and up 7.9% in 1985).

In three States the sentenced prisoner population increased by more than 20%: Maine (22.6%), Michigan (21.9%), and New Hampshire (21.7%). Three States, all Western, had increases between 15% and 20%: Montana (15.7%), California (15.6%), and Alaska (15.0%). (For additional State comparisons, see table 3.)

Table 1. Change in the State and Federal prison populations, 1977-85

Year	Number of inmates	Annual percent change	Total percent change since 1977
1977	300,024		
1978	307,276	2.4%	2.4%
1979	314,457	2.3	4.8
1980	329,821	4.9	9.9
1981	369,930	12.2	23.3
1982	413,806	11.9	37.9
1983	437,248	5.7	45.7
1984	464,567	6.2	54.8
1985	503,601	8.4	67.9

Note: All counts are for December 31 of each year and may differ from previously reported numbers because of revision.

Regional variations persist

During 1985 the growth in sentenced prisoner population in Western States (11.6%) and Midwestern States (10.9%) was more than twice the growth in Southern States (3.9%). Since 1980, sentenced prison populations in Western States have increased by nearly 90%, compared to 69% in the Northeast, 47% in the Midwest, and 37% in the South (table 4). Six States more than doubled their sentenced populations since 1980; four are in the West: Alaska (159.9%), Hawaii (128.8%), Nevada (112.6%), and California (107.5%).

California's increase of more than 25,000 sentenced prisoners since 1980 accounts for 62% of the increase for the West and 16% of the entire national increase among the States since 1980. In 1980, 7.9% of the Nation's sentenced

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State prisoners were in California and in 1985, 10.8%.

Michigan contributed substantially to the 1985 growth in the sentenced prisoner population of the Midwest. Although Michigan accounted for 17% of the region's sentenced prisoners in 1984, it accounted for 34% of the region's increase in 1985. Since 1980, however, the Midwest has grown more than twice as fast as Michigan (46.9% vs. 17.7%).

Female prisoner population grows at faster pace

Although the female prison population has grown at a faster rate than the male population in each year between 1981 and 1985, only about 1 of every 22 prisoners in 1985 was a female. The higher growth rates for women over the period 1981 to 1985 have raised the female percentage of the Nation's prison population from 4.2% in 1981 to 4.6% in 1985. During the 60-year history of the National Prisoners Statistics Program, women were between 4.0% and 4.6% of the Nation's prisoners during the periods 1942 to 1948 and 1977 to 1985. In all other years, women accounted for between 2.9% and 3.9% of the prison population.

In 1983, 10 States and the Federal Prison System reported more than 500 female inmates. By 1985, 14 States and the Federal system had more than 500 female inmates (table 5). California's female inmate population grew by 26% during the year, compared to 15% for males, and at yearend was the largest in the Nation (2,906).

Rates of imprisonment increase

During 1985 the number of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents surpassed 200, setting a new record (table 2). Thirteen of the 16 jurisdictions exceeding the national average were located in the South; the other 3, in the West. Nevada had the highest incarceration rate (412 per 100,000); North Dakota the lowest (52).

Since 1980, the number of sentenced inmates per 100,000 residents has risen by nearly 45%, from 139 to 201. During this period, per capita incarceration rates have grown most rapidly in the West, increasing by nearly 69%, compared to 68% in the Northeast, 47% in the Midwest, and 27% in the South.

Table 2. Prisoners under the jurisdiction of State and Federal correctional authorities, by sex, region and State, yearend 1984 and 1985

	Total			Sentenced to more than a year			Incarceration rates 1985[a]
	1985	1984	Percent change 1984-85	1985	1984	Percent change 1984-85	
U.S. total	503,601	464,567	8.4%	481,616	446,108	8.0%	201
Federal	40,223	34,263	17.4	32,695	27,602	18.5	14
State	463,378	430,304	7.7	448,921	418,506	7.3	187
Male	480,510	443,717	8.3	460,210	426,713	7.9	394
Female	23,091	20,850	10.7	21,406	19,395	10.4	17
Northeast	75,743	70,538	7.4%	72,756	67,838	7.2%	148
Connecticut	6,149	5,718	7.5	4,943	3,748	7.9	127
Maine	1,226	1,025	19.6	1,030	840	22.6	88
Massachusetts	5,447	4,890	11.4	5,447	4,890	11.4	93
New Hampshire	683	561	21.7	683	561	21.7	88
New Jersey	11,335	10,363	9.4	11,335	10,363	9.4	149
New York	34,718	33,155	4.7	34,718	33,155	4.7	195
Pennsylvania	14,227	13,090	8.7	14,119	12,998	8.6	119
Rhode Island	1,307	1,221	7.0	964	891	8.2	99
Vermont	651	515	26.4	417	392	6.4	78
Midwest	95,356	85,890	11.0%	94,740	85,460	10.9%	160
Illinois	18,634	17,187	8.4	18,634	17,187	8.4	161
Indiana	9,904	9,328	6.2	9,615	9,063	6.1	175
Iowa	2,607	2,836	-8.1	2,607	2,836	-8.1	90
Kansas	4,748	4,238	12.0	4,748	4,238	12.0	193
Michigan	17,799	14,604	21.9	17,799	14,604	21.9	196
Minnesota	2,343	2,167	8.1	2,343	2,167	8.1	56
Missouri	9,898	8,808	12.4	9,898	8,808	12.4	196
Nebraska	1,689	1,654	2.1	1,608	1,566	2.7	100
North Dakota	407	434	-6.2	355	374	-5.1	52
Ohio	20,864	18,694	11.6	20,864	18,694	11.6	194
South Dakota	1,047	917	14.2	1,006	900	11.8	142
Wisconsin	5,416	5,023	7.8	5,263	5,023	4.8	110
South	203,022	193,971	4.7%	195,984	188,634	3.9%	238
Alabama	11,015	10,482	5.1	10,749	10,246	4.9	267
Arkansas	4,640	4,454	4.2	4,505	4,427	4.0	195
Delaware	2,550	2,200	15.9	1,842	1,615	14.1	295
District of Columbia[b]	6,404	4,834		4,604	4,031	14.2	738
Florida	28,600	27,106	5.5	28,482	26,933	5.8	247
Georgia	16,118	15,731	2.5	15,298	14,944	1.8	252
Kentucky	5,766	5,502	4.8	5,766	5,502	4.8	155
Louisiana	13,900	13,919	-.1	13,900	13,919	-.1	308
Maryland	13,005	13,124	-.9	12,303	12,442	-1.1	279
Mississippi	6,392	6,115	4.5	6,208	5,974	3.9	237
North Carolina	17,344	16,371	5.9	16,007	15,219	5.2	254
Oklahoma	8,477	7,872	7.7	8,477	7,872	7.7	255
South Carolina	10,538	10,011	5.3	9,916	9,434	5.1	294
Tennessee	6,943	7,302	-4.9	6,943	7,302	-4.9	145
Texas	37,532	36,682	2.3	37,532	36,682	2.3	226
Virginia	12,073	10,667	13.2	11,717	10,493	11.7	204
West Virginia	1,725	1,599	7.9	1,725	1,599	7.9	89
West	89,257	79,905	11.7%	85,441	76,574	11.6%	177
Alaska	2,311	1,995	15.8	1,484	1,290	15.0	279
Arizona	8,518	7,845	8.6	8,264	7,638	8.2	256
California	50,111	43,314	15.7	48,280	41,780	15.6	181
Colorado	3,369	3,364	.1	3,369	3,347	.7	103
Hawaii	2,111	1,934	9.2	1,428	1,299	9.9	134
Idaho	1,381	1,282	7.7	1,381	1,282	7.7	137
Montana	1,163	1,005	15.7	1,163	1,005	15.7	140
Nevada	3,910	3,510	11.4	3,910	3,510	11.4	412
New Mexico	2,313	2,129	8.6	2,112	1,908	10.7	144
Oregon	4,833	4,563	5.9	4,833	4,563	5.9	179
Utah	1,570	1,419	10.6	1,550	1,407	10.2	93
Washington	6,909	6,821	1.3	6,909	6,821	1.3	156
Wyoming	758	724	4.7	758	724	4.7	148

Note: Explanatory notes for each State are reported in the Appendix. Prisoner counts for 1984 may differ from those reported in previous publications and are subject to revision as updated figures become available.

[a]The number of prisoners sentenced to more than 1 year per 100,000 resident population on December 31, 1985.

[b]Figures for 1985 are not comparable to previous years because of the inclusion of additional jail inmates. Counts and incarceration rates of those sentenced to more than 1 year are comparable to figures reported in previous years.

Table 3. The prison situation among the States at yearend, 1985

10 States with the largest 1985 prison populations	Number of inmates	Increase 1984-85	10 States with the largest percent increases, 1984-85	Percent increase	10 States with the largest percent increases, 1980-85*	Percent increase	10 States with the highest incarceration rates, 1985*	Prisoners per 100,000 residents
California	50,111	6,797	Vermont	26.4%	Alaska	159.9%	Nevada	412
Texas	37,532	850	Michigan	21.9	Hawaii	128.8	Louisiana	308
New York	34,718	1,563	New Hampshire	21.7	Nevada	112.6	Delaware	295
Florida	28,600	1,494	Maine	19.6	New Hampshire	109.5	South Carolina	294
Ohio	20,864	2,170	Delaware	15.9	California	107.5	Alaska	279
Illinois	18,634	1,447	Alaska	15.8	New Jersey	103.7	Maryland	279
Michigan	17,799	3,195	California	15.7	North Dakota	91.9	Alabama	267
North Carolina	17,344	973	Montana	15.7	Kansas	90.4	Arizona	256
Georgia	16,118	387	South Dakota	14.2	Arizona	89.5	Oklahoma	255
Pennsylvania	14,227	1,137	Virginia	13.2	Oklahoma	76.8	North Carolina	254

Note: The District of Columbia as a wholly urban jurisdiction is excluded. *Prisoners with sentences of more than 1 year.

Table 4. Percent change in sentenced prison population from 1980 to 1985, by region and State

Region	Percent decrease	Percent increase					
		0-19%	20-39%	40-59%	60-79%	80-99%	100% or more
Northeast			Vermont 21.9	Rhode Island 57.8 Maine 53.5 Connecticut 47.0	Pennsylvania 74.1 Massachusetts 72.9 New York 60.4		New Hampshire 109.5 New Jersey 103.7
Midwest		Michigan 17.7 Minnesota 17.1 Nebraska 14.7 Iowa 5.2	Wisconsin 32.2	Ohio 54.7 Indiana 53.1	Illinois 73.8 Missouri 72.9 South Dakota 65.2	North Dakota 91.9 Kansas 90.4	
South	Tennessee -1.1	North Carolina 10.7	West Virginia 37.2 Virginia 36.5 South Carolina 33.5 Georgia 27.6 Texas 25.6	Maryland 59.1 Arkansas 58.2 Louisiana 56.4 Florida 40.9	Oklahoma 76.8 Delaware 69.5 Dist. of Columbia 69.3 Alabama 68.8 Mississippi 63.7 Kentucky 60.7		
West			Colorado 29.1	Montana 57.6 Washington 57.1 Oregon 52.4 Wyoming 41.9	New Mexico 76.1 Idaho 69.0 Utah 67.0	Arizona 89.5	Alaska 159.9 Hawaii 128.8 Nevada 112.6 California 107.5
Regional totals			South 37.4	Midwest 46.9	Northeast 68.6	West 89.6	
U.S. summary				Federal 58.6 Total 52.4 State 52.0			

Note: Sentenced prisoners are those with sentences of more than a year.

Table 5. Women in State and Federal institutions at yearend, 1985

Jurisdiction	Number of women inmates	Percent of all inmates	Percent change in women inmate population, 1984-85
United States, total	23,091	4.6%	10.7%
Federal	2,404	6.0	20.4
State	20,687	4.5	9.7
States with at least 500 women inmates:			
California	2,906	5.8%	25.8%
Texas	1,599	4.3	-5.4
Florida	1,304	4.6	11.0
Ohio	1,153	5.5	12.9
New York	1,061	3.1	4.9
Georgia	825	5.1	8.1
Michigan	816	4.6	19.5
North Carolina	747	4.3	6.4
Illinois	673	3.6	5.0
Louisiana	620	4.5	2.0
Alabama	562	5.1	7.9
Oklahoma	524	6.2	11.0
South Carolina	511	4.8	13.6
Pennsylvania	500	3.5	5.3

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More than 10,000 in local jails because of State prison crowding

At the end of 1985, 19 States reported a total of 10,143 sentenced State prisoners held in local jails because of crowding in State facilities (table 6). Although the number of States with prisoners held locally increased by 4 from the preceding year, the number of such inmates declined by 1,340. Three States—Louisiana, New Jersey, and California—accounted for 55% of the State-sentenced prisoners in local jails at yearend. Four States—Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, and New Jersey—held more than 10% of their sentenced State prisoners in local jails. Tennessee reduced the number of such prisoners by more than half between 1984 and 1985.

Table 6. Number of State prisoners held in local jails because of prison crowding, by State, yearend 1984 and 1985

States housing prisoners in local jails	Prisoners held in local jails: Number		Prisoners held in local jails: As percent of all prisoners	
	1984	1985	1984	1985
Total	11,483	10,143	2.7%	2.2%
Alabama	457	398	4.4	3.8
Arkansas	0	115	0	2.5
California	1,513	1,122	3.5	2.2
Colorado[a]	159	245	4.5	6.8
Idaho[a]	0	9	0	.6
Illinois	73	43	.4	.2
Kentucky	709	791	12.9	13.7
Louisiana	2,885	2,923	20.7	21.0
Maine	53	51	5.2	4.2
Massachusetts	0	2	0	—
Mississippi	1,296	933	21.2	14.6
New Jersey[a]	1,536	1,486	12.9	11.6
South Carolina	474	429	4.7	4.1
Tennessee[a]	1,495	628	17.0	8.3
Utah	32	33	2.3	2.1
Vermont[b]	0	11	0	1.7
Virginia	663	786	6.2	6.5
Washington	61	49	.9	.7
Wisconsin	77	89	1.5	1.6

—Less than 0.1%.
[a]For States not including jail backups in their jurisdiction counts, the percentage of jurisdiction population was calculated on the combined total of jail and prison.
[b]Vermont reported 11 inmates in local lockups in 1985.

Increased capacity reported

The extent of crowding in the Nation's prisons is difficult to determine precisely because of the absence of uniform measures for defining capacity. A wide variety of capacity measures are in use among the 52 reporting jurisdictions since capacity may reflect both available space to house inmates as well as the ability to staff and operate an institution. To estimate the capacity of the Nation's prisons, States were asked to supply up to three measures for yearend 1985—rated, operational, and design capacities. These measures were defined as follows:

- Rated capacity is the number of beds or inmates assigned by a rating official to institutions within the State.
- Operational capacity is the number of inmates that can be accommodated based on a facility's staff, existing programs, and services.
- Design capacity is the number of inmates that planners or architects intended for the facility.

Of the 52 reporting jurisdictions, 39 supplied rated capacities, 45 provided operational capacities, and 35 reported design capacities (table 7). As a result, estimates of total capacity and measures of the relationship to population are based on the highest and lowest capacity figures provided. (Twenty States reported only one capacity measure or gave the same figure for each capacity measure they reported.)

Between 1983 and 1985, State and Federal prison capacities increased to accommodate about 44,000-45,000 additional inmates (based on either the highest or lowest capacities—table 8). During the same period, prison populations grew by nearly 68,000 inmates. At the end of 1985, the capacity of State and Federal prisons was estimated to be between 410,095 inmates and 465,512 inmates. Only 7% of the available capacity at the end of 1985 was maintained by the Federal Government, which accounted for less than 5% of the increase in capacity over the previous 2 years.

Table 7. Reported Federal and State prison capacities at yearend 1985

States	Rated capacity	Operational capacity	Design capacity
Federal	26,131	32,585	26,131
Northeast			
Connecticut	6,072	4,968	3,781
Maine	1,033	1,033	1,033
Massachusetts	3,257	...	...
New Hampshire*	565	565	501
New Jersey	...	11,564	9,287
New York	35,934	35,934	32,714
Pennsylvania	...	...	10,690
Rhode Island	1,456	1,407	1,359
Vermont	586	586	536
Midwest			
Illinois	19,118	19,118	15,356
Indiana	6,628	...	...
Iowa	2,816	2,652	2,572
Kansas	3,410	4,939	...
Michigan	...	14,387	...
Minnesota	2,410	2,410	2,546
Missouri	...	10,191	...
Nebraska	1,562	1,513	1,542
North Dakota	...	471	471
Ohio	...	...	13,282
South Dakota	1,189	1,090	1,189
Wisconsin	4,089	...	...
South			
Alabama	9,787	9,787	9,787
Arkansas	...	4,512	...
Delaware	...	2,207	2,217
District of Columbia	5,711	6,193	...
Florida	29,022	29,022	33,824
Georgia	...	16,021	...
Kentucky	...	5,020	...
Louisiana	11,017	11,017	11,017
Maryland	...	13,328	9,435
Mississippi	5,650	...	...
North Carolina	...	16,633	...
Oklahoma	7,492	7,117	...
South Carolina	7,976	7,976	6,927
Tennessee	7,664	7,664	...
Texas	40,134	38,127	40,134
Virginia	9,617	9,617	9,351
West Virginia*	1,547	1,640	1,567
West			
Alaska	1,968	1,968	1,968
Arizona	6,595	8,452	...
California	29,702	45,237	29,702
Colorado	3,381	3,381	...
Hawaii	...	1,125	1,162
Idaho	1,315	1,315	1,022
Montana	749	1,094	749
Nevada	3,729	3,729	3,000
New Mexico	2,390	...	...
Oregon	2,459	3,688	2,739
Utah	1,457	1,457	1,372
Washington	5,291	7,278	5,291
Wyoming	605	675	605

... Data not available.
*Capacity figures are for males only.
West Virginia reported an operational capacity including females of 1,716.

Table 8. Population as a percentage of reported capacity for State and Federal prisons, 1983-85

	1983		1984		1985		Increase in capacity
	Capacity	Population as percent of capacity	Capacity	Population as percent of capacity	Capacity	Population as percent of capacity	1983-85
Total							
Highest capacity	421,187	102%	434,371	105%	465,512	106%	44,325
Lowest capacity	365,137	118	388,065	117	410,095	121	44,958
Federal							
Highest capacity	30,291	105	31,161	110	32,585	123	2,294
Lowest capacity	24,399	131	24,922	137	26,131	154	1,732
State							
Highest capacity	390,896	102	403,210	105	432,927	105	42,031
Lowest capacity	340,738	117	363,143	116	383,964	119	43,226

Note: States were asked to report their rated, operational, and design capacities. Tabulations reflect the highest and lowest of the three capacities reported for 1983, 1984, and 1985.

Most jurisdictions are operating above capacity

Generally, prisons require reserve capacity in order to operate efficiently. Confinement units need to be maintained and repaired periodically, housing space is needed to accommodate protective custody and disciplinary cases, and space may be needed to cope with emergencies. At the end of 1985, few States had any reserve capacity (table 9). Only nine States were operating below 95% of their highest capacity. Forty jurisdictions and the Federal prison system reported operating at approximately 100% or more of their lowest capacity; 34 of these held populations that met or exceeded their highest capacities. Three States exceeded their highest capacity by more than 50%.

Overall, State prisons are estimated to be operating at approximately 105% of their highest reported capacities and at 119% of their lowest capacities. The Federal system is estimated to be operating between 23% and 54% above capacity.

States have employed many methods to alleviate crowding. Construction of permanent and temporary facilities, backups in local jails, double-bunking, intensive community supervision programs, early paroles, and sentence rollbacks have all been used to make room for new inmates.

Based on the average of highest and lowest capacities reported, since 1978 State prison systems have added approximately 165,000 beds producing an increase in capacity of nearly two-thirds over the 7-year period.

During 1985, 19 States reported the early release of a total of 18,617 inmates because of prison crowding. About two-thirds of these early releases occurred in three States—Georgia, Florida, and Tennessee. Michigan, which reported nearly 4,000 early releases in both 1983 and 1984, reported none in 1985.

No single indicator can determine the exact magnitude of crowding in a particular jurisdiction. Jail backups, early releases, and populations in excess of capacity, taken together, are indicative of the extent of crowding. Twenty-nine of the 52 jurisdictions reported jail backups or early releases because of crowding during the year; 9 of these—Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Jersey, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin—reported using both measures.

Table 9. Profile of prison crowding, 1985

Regions and States	Population as a percentage of: Highest capacity	Lowest capacity	Because of prison crowding: Percent of prison population held in local jails	Number of early releases
United States, total	106%	121%		
Federal	123	154		
State	105	119	2.2%	18,617
Northeast				
Connecticut[a]	101	163		0
Maine	114	114	4.2	0
Massachusetts	167	167	—	0
New Hampshire[b]	118	133	0	0
New Jersey	98	122	11.6	287
New York	97	106	0	0
Pennsylvania	133	133	0	0
Rhode Island[a]	90	96		0
Vermont[a]	111	119	1.7	0
Midwest				
Illinois	97	121	.2	0
Indiana[c]	149	149	0	1,257
Iowa	93	101	0	0
Kansas	96	139	0	0
Michigan	124	124	0	0
Minnesota	92	97	0	0
Missouri	97	97	0	0
Nebraska	108	112	0	0
North Dakota	86	86	0	0
Ohio	157	157	0	0
South Dakota	88	96	0	0
Wisconsin	130	130	1.6	125
South				
Alabama	109	109	3.6	0
Arkansas	100	100	2.5	87
Delaware[a]	115	116		1,277
District of Columbia[a]	103	112		0
Florida	85	99	0	2,501
Georgia	101	101	...	7,665
Kentucky	99	99	13.7	306
Louisiana	100	100	21.0	0
Maryland	98	138	0	0
Mississippi	97	97	14.6	268
North Carolina	104	104	0	671
Oklahoma	113	119	0	429
South Carolina	127	146	4.1	974
Tennessee	91	91	8.3	2,276
Texas	94	98	0	0
Virginia	117	121	6.5	0
West Virginia[b]	102	108	0	0
West				
Alaska[a]	117	117		39
Arizona	101	129	0	105
California	108	165	2.2	0
Colorado	100	100	6.8	0
Hawaii[a]	182	188		0
Idaho	105	135	.6	0
Montana	106	155	0	5
Nevada	105	130	0	0
New Mexico	97	97	0	0
Oregon	102	152	0	0
Utah	106	112	2.1	90
Washington	94	130	.7	180
Wyoming	112	125	0	95

Note: Capacity was defined as the average of the highest and lowest capacities reported in table 8. For some States percentages are the same because they reported only one type of capacity or because they reported the same figure for each capacity type.

...Data not available.
—Less than 0.1%.
[a]State has combined jail-prison system.
[b]Capacity figures are for males only.
[c]Indiana is prohibited by policy from housing State prisoners in local jails.

Explanatory notes

Alabama: Capacity that represents outside community programs is not included in the reported capacity figures.

Alaska: Because prisons and jails form one integrated system, all NPS data include both jail and prison populations.

Arizona: Population and early release counts represent a complete automated enumeration from the Adult Information Management Systems data base. Capacity figures are as of December 9, 1985.

Arkansas: The Arkansas Department of Corrections has only one type of capacity, which is set by the Board of Corrections. This capacity is reported as operational capacity.

California: Population counts are based on custody data. Because of prison crowding, California uses jails and work furlough facilities to house inmates. Inmates in both types of facilities are included in the count of prisoners housed in local jails.

Colorado: Population counts are based on estimated custody data believed to be within 1% of complete enumeration. Female population counts are as of January 3, 1986. Population counts exclude 245 male inmates housed in local jails awaiting pickup. Capacity figures include 383 spaces in community centers.

Connecticut: Because prisons and jails form one integrated system, all NPS data include both jail and prison populations.

Delaware: Because prisons and jails form one integrated system, all NPS data include both jail and prison populations. Population counts for females are estimates.

District of Columbia: Because prisons and jails form one integrated system, all NPS data include both jail and prison populations. Population counts are based on custody data. Inmates housed in Federal Bureau of Prison's facilities as a result of crowding are not included.

Federal: Population counts for unsentenced inmates include 1,882 males and 6 females who come under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Florida: Population counts are based on custody data.

Georgia: Population counts exclude an undetermined number of inmates housed in local jails awaiting pickup.

Hawaii: Since prisons and jails form one integrated system, all NPS data include both jail and prison populations. Population counts for Hawaii are based on estimates believed to be within 1% of a complete enumeration. Operational capacity was as of December 30, 1985.

Idaho: Population counts exclude 7 male and 2 female inmates housed in local jails awaiting pickup.

Indiana: By policy, this State cannot use local jails to alleviate prison crowding.

Iowa: Population counts are based on custody data.

Kansas: For rated capacity Kansas reported "Optimum Management Capacity," which is the largest number of inmates that can be accommodated and still maintain a desirable level of management and control. For operational capacity Kansas reported "Maximum Capacity," which is the largest number of inmates that can be physically housed without using nonhousing areas such as hallways, recreation areas, infirmary, and segregation space.

Kentucky: Population counts are as of January 3, 1986, and include inmates housed in jails because of prison crowding for both 1984 and 1985.

Maryland: Population totals are actual counts; breakdowns for sentence length are extrapolated estimates. Prisoners with sentences of less than 1 year have been excluded from 1980 data in tables 10 and 11, and data provided since 1983 include Patuxent Institution.

Massachusetts: Population counts for inmates with over 1-year maximum sentence include an undetermined number of inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less.

Michigan: Population counts include only inmates in Michigan's custody and inmates in the Community Residential Program. Capacity figures exclude the capacities of pre-release centers and halfway houses.

New Hampshire: New Hampshire has no facility to house female inmates. Thus, all females are housed in county, Federal, or other States' facilities.

New Jersey: Population counts exclude 1,470 male and 16 female inmates housed in local jails because of overcrowding.

North Carolina: Population totals are actual counts; breakdowns for sentence length are estimates.

Ohio: Population counts for inmates with over 1-year maximum sentence include an undetermined number of inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less.

Oklahoma: Population counts for inmates with over 1-year maximum sentence include an undetermined number of inmates with a sentence of 1 year or less.

Oregon: Population counts are for all inmates in Oregon's jurisdiction including those out to hospitals, out to court, out on furlough, and out on escape. Capacity figures for this State exclude 275 special-purpose beds for males and 4 for females. For operational capacity Oregon reported figures for actual "bed occupancy count" as of December 31, 1985. Table 9 excludes 379 inmates on escape, 614 inmates on furloughs, and 96 transfers.

Rhode Island: Because prisons and jails form one integrated system, all NPS data include both jail and prison populations.

Tennessee: Population counts are based on custody data and exclude 628 inmates housed in local jails because of crowding. Tennessee's prison system was barred from accepting inmates in excess of the number released after October 23, 1985, by a Federal court order.

Texas: Population counts are based on custody data.

Utah: Early releases are estimated based on the actual count of "accelerated" parole releases for the first 6 months of 1985.

Vermont: Because prisons and jails form one integrated system, all NPS data include both jail and prison populations. Population counts are as of December 21, 1985. The counts for jail crowding include 11 male inmates housed in local lockups.

Washington: Capacity figures exclude space in work-release facilities, which housed 387 male and 28 female inmates on December 31, 1985.

Wisconsin: Rated capacity figures include space for 160 inmates at the Wisconsin Resource Center (part of the Division of Care and Treatment).

Table 10. Court commitments to State prisons relative to adult arrests for selected serious offenses, 1978 to 1984

Year	Number of court commitments to prison for any offense[a]	Number of selected offenses reported to the police	Commitments to prison per 1,000 selected offenses	Estimated number of adult arrests for selected offenses[b]	Commitments to prison per 1,000 adult arrests for selected offenses
1978	112,874	4,213,850	27	610,114	185
1979	118,428	4,535,730	26	631,772	187
1980	130,323	5,139,720	25	666,063	196
1981	149,188	5,141,520	29	697,409	214
1982	164,648	4,769,490	35	752,873	219
1983	173,289	4,387,990	39	702,662	247
1984	166,927	4,257,680	39	677,275	246

Note: Selected offenses include murder, nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and burglary. Data for crimes reported to the police and adult arrests are from Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports for the U.S., 1978-84 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office).

[a]Inmates admitted to prison from sentencing courts.

[b]Arrests of those aged 18 and older for selected offenses. Arrests are based on total estimated arrests multiplied by the percentage of adult arrests derived from known arrests. By year, the percentage of adult arrestees among all arrestees for selected offenses was:

1978 - 62.2%
1979 - 65.0%
1980 - 67.4%
1981 - 69.1%
1982 - 71.5%
1983 - 72.1%
1984 - 73.0%

Crime and prison population growth

There is some evidence that changes in criminal justice policies increased a criminal's probability of being incarcerated during the period 1980-84. Murder, nonnegligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and burglary are among the most serious crimes and account for about 60% of all prison commitments. Between 1980 and 1983 the ratio of the number of persons committed to prison to the number of these crimes reported to the police increased about 56% (from 25 commitments per 1,000 reported crimes to 39, table 10). The ratio was unchanged from 1983 to 1984. Comparing prison commitments to the number of adult arrests for the same crimes, the increase was 26% for 1980 to 1983 before dropping very slightly from 1983 to 1984.

Admissions-to-crime ratios for individual States suggest differences among jurisdictions in their response to crime and provide an alternative to measures of prison use based on population (table 11). Based on the number of murders, nonnegligent manslaughters, rapes, robberies, aggravated assaults, and burglaries reported to the police, Southern States in 1984 imposed the highest level of imprisonment with an overall ratio of 54 commitments per 1,000 of these crimes; States in the Northeast imposed the lowest—28 per 1,000. Ten jurisdictions—South Dakota, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Alaska, North Dakota, Mississippi, Wyoming, Oklahoma, and the District of Columbia—all had ratios at least 50% higher than the national average of 39 per 1,000 serious crimes.

Comparing prison commitments to the amount of crime rather than to the size of the resident population can significantly affect how a State ranks in prison use. Nevada, for example, was third among the States in 1984 in the number of prison admissions per 100,000 adult residents, but 17th in the number of commitments relative to crime. Similarly, the District of Columbia had a population-based admissions rate three times the National average in 1984 but a crime-based admissions rate more comparable to neighboring jurisdictions (63 per 1,000 offenses in D.C. vs. 57 per 1,000 in Virginia).

Between 1980 and 1984 the ratio of admissions to crime increased in 48 States and the District of Columbia. In 34 jurisdictions the increase was at least 50%; and in 4 of these it was more than 100%—Massachusetts, New Jersey, Utah and Hawaii.

Crime-based admissions rates and population-based admissions rates also show different patterns over time. In six States—Arkansas, Connecticut, Kentucky, Maine, Nebraska, and South Carolina—the number of commitments to prison per 100,000 adult residents declined between 1980 and 1984. In all six, however, the ratio of prison commitments to reported crimes either remained the same or increased during the period. That is, these States were sending fewer persons to prison per adult resident in 1984 than in 1980 but the same or more persons to prison per reported crime. Overall, between 1980 and 1984 commitments to prison relative to crime increased more than 2 1/2 times as fast as commitments relative to population (56% vs. 18.5%).

Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletins are prepared principally by BJS staff. This bulletin was written by Lawrence A. Greenfeld, corrections unit chief. Carol B. Kalish, chief of data analysis, edits the bulletins. Marianne Zawitz assisted in the editing. Marilyn Marbrook, publications unit chief, administered production, assisted by Betty Sherman, Millie J. Baldea, and Joyce M. Stanford. Statistical assistance was provided by Sophie Bowen of BJS and by Greg Wells of the Bureau of the Census.

June 1986, NCJ-101384

Table 11. State prison admissions relative to selected serious offenses and the adult population, by State, 1980 and 1984

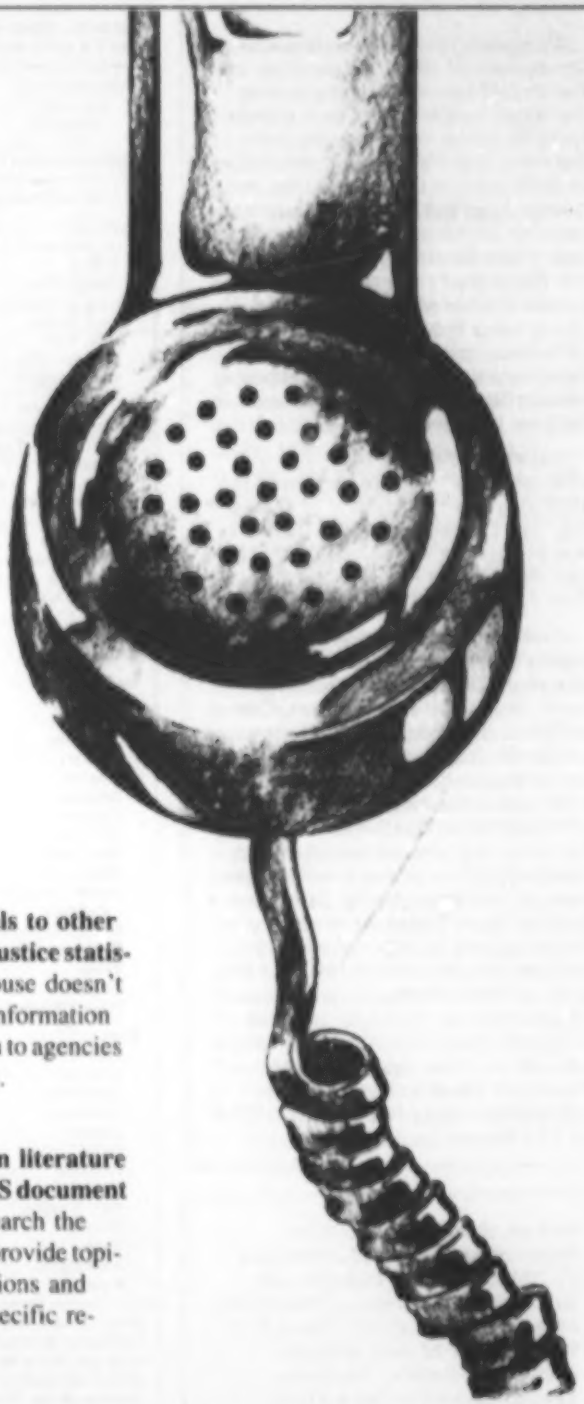
Regions and States	Admissions per 1,000 selected offenses			Admissions per 100,000 adults		
	1980	1984	Percent change 1980-84	1980	1984	Percent change 1980-84
United States, total	25	39	56.0%	80	96	20.0%
Northeast	15	28	86.7%	48	61	27.1%
Connecticut	37	44	18.9	105	88	-16.2
Maine	28	33	17.9	54	47	-13.0
Massachusetts	8	19	137.5	26	40	53.8
New Hampshire	14	27	92.9	30	32	6.7
New Jersey	14	31	121.4	49	66	34.7
New York	13	25	92.3	56	73	30.4
Pennsylvania	17	33	94.1	33	47	42.4
Rhode Island	12	20	66.7	35	40	14.3
Vermont	32	50	56.3	77	78	1.3
Midwest	28	36	28.6%	71	78	9.9%
Illinois	32	31	*	78	81	3.8
Indiana	37	58	56.8	88	98	11.4
Iowa	28	43	53.6	50	62	24.0
Kansas	26	42	61.5	69	80	15.9
Michigan	20	21	5.0	67	71	6.0
Minnesota	12	23	91.7	25	38	52.0
Missouri	24	40	66.7	74	85	14.9
Nebraska	35	38	8.6	56	46	-17.9
North Dakota	47	70	48.9	36	44	22.2
Ohio	45	53	17.8	97	103	6.2
South Dakota	61	111	82.0	71	101	42.3
Wisconsin	26	38	46.2	46	54	17.4
South	38	54	42.1%	116	134	15.5%
Alabama	49	78	59.2	138	154	11.6
Arkansas	50	58	16.0	104	97	-6.7
Delaware	30	50	66.7	88	102	15.9
District of Columbia	36	63	75.0	213	288	35.2
Florida	24	38	58.3	109	132	21.1
Georgia	49	79	61.2	156	185	18.6
Kentucky	47	47	0	86	70	-18.6
Louisiana	31	47	51.6	100	129	29.0
Maryland	30	42	40.0	107	110	2.8
Mississippi	43	70	62.8	97	128	32.0
North Carolina	61	83	36.1	158	172	8.9
Oklahoma	38	64	68.4	111	165	48.6
South Carolina	47	56	19.1	153	146	-4.6
Tennessee	33	54	63.6	89	115	29.2
Texas	38	48	26.3	129	147	14.0
Virginia	36	57	58.3	75	87	16.0
West Virginia	30	50	66.7	38	56	47.4
West	17	30	76.5%	66	93	40.9%
Alaska	42	74	76.2	115	203	76.5
Arizona	24	44	83.3	97	135	39.2
California	15	27	80.0	66	93	40.9
Colorado	16	29	81.3	55	81	47.3
Hawaii	9	24	166.7	28	49	75.0
Idaho	34	58	70.6	78	95	21.8
Montana	34	43	26.5	55	66	20.0
Nevada	26	51	96.2	136	179	31.6
New Mexico	17	33	94.1	53	111	109.4
Oregon	27	34	25.9	83	107	28.9
Utah	15	40	166.7	39	71	82.1
Washington	14	17	21.4	46	49	6.5
Wyoming	38	68	78.9	71	87	22.5

Note: Prison admissions refer to the number of prisoners received from courts with sentences of more than 1 year. Selected offenses are murder, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and burglary. Adults are the resident population aged 18 and over.

*Offense figures for Illinois for 1984 may not be comparable to previous years.

Sources: National Prisoner Statistics; Uniform Crime Reports; Census Bureau estimates of population.

Bureau of Justice Statistics Announces the Justice Statistics Clearinghouse



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(revised June 1986)

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Households Touched by Crime, 1985

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June 1986

In 1985 crime touched 1 in every 4 American homes. More than 22 million households experienced a rape, robbery, assault, burglary, or theft. The encouraging news is that the proportion of American households touched by crime has dropped for 4 consecutive years.

In 1975, the first year for which this measure was available, nearly a third of American households were victimized by crime. By 1985 the actual number of households touched by crime had fallen more than a million, even though the number of households in the United States grew 16 million.

Clearly, crime remains a serious problem for our society. The evidence is that we are making progress, but much remains to be done.

Steven R. Schlesinger
Director

Twenty-five percent of the Nation's households were touched by a crime of violence or theft in 1985, compared to 26% in 1984 and 32% in 1975, the first year for which this measure is available. Most of the decrease between 1984 and 1985 was the result of a decline in the percentage of households touched by personal theft. The percentage of households touched by rape, robbery, assault, burglary, auto theft, or household theft did not change measurably over the year (table 1).

The term "household" as used in this report refers to a dwelling unit and the people who occupy it. A household is considered "touched by crime" if during the year it experienced a burglary, auto theft or household theft, or if a household member was raped, robbed, or assaulted, or a victim of personal theft, no matter where the crime occurred. These offenses, which include attempted as well as completed crimes, are measured by the National Crime Survey, the source of this report.

Five percent of the households in the Nation had a member who was the victim of a violent crime in 1985 and a similar proportion of households was burglarized at least once during the year. Eighteen percent of all households were victims of a completed or attempted theft during the year.

In 1985, households with high incomes and households in urban areas were more vulnerable to crime than others. There is some evidence that black households were somewhat more vulnerable than white households. During 1985, 26% of black households, 29% of households with incomes of $25,000 or more, and 30% of urban households were touched by crime.

Households touched by selected crimes of violence and theft, 1975-85

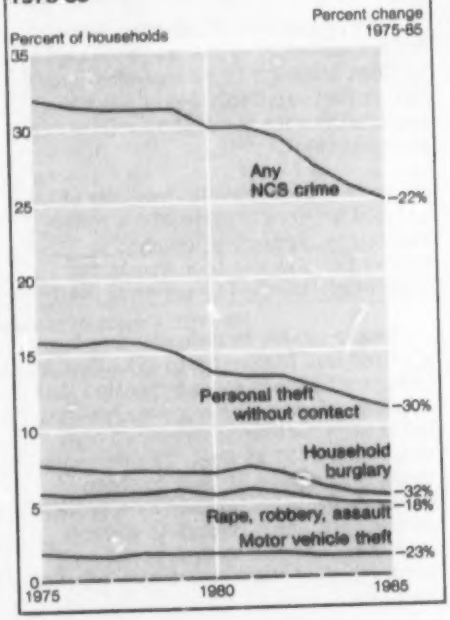

Figure 1

Trends

The proportion of households touched by crime during 1985 (25%) was the lowest in the 11 years for which the indicator has been kept (figure 1). More than a million fewer households were touched by crime in 1985 than were touched by crime 11 years earlier, despite an increase of about 16 million households in the Nation during that period (table 2).

During the same period the percentage of households touched by crime fell from 32% to 25%. The sharpest decreases came in the second half of the 11-year period, beginning in 1982, when 29% of all households were touched by crime. Suburban and rural households had greater relative decreases than urban ones over the 11-year period. The proportions of suburban and rural households touched by crime declined by 25% and 24% respectively between

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Table 1. Households touched by crime, 1985 and relative percent change since 1984

Households	1985 Number of households	1985 Percent	1984 Number of households	1984 Percent	Relative percent change 1984-85
Total	88,852,000	100.0%	87,791,000	100.0%	
Touched by					
Any NCS crime	22,191,000	25.0	22,806,000	26.0	-4%*
Violent crime	4,235,000	4.8	4,392,000	5.0	-5
Rape	125,000	.1	161,000	.2	-22
Robbery	842,000	.9	914,000	1.0	-9
Assault	3,488,000	3.9	3,566,000	4.1	-3
Aggravated	1,246,000	1.4	1,308,000	1.5	-6
Simple	2,459,000	2.8	2,542,000	2.9	-6
Total theft	15,699,000	17.7	16,330,000	18.6	-5*
Personal	10,233,000	11.5	10,776,000	12.3	-6*
with contact	439,000	.5	520,000	.6	-17**
without contact	9,910,000	11.2	10,353,000	11.8	-5*
Household	7,240,000	8.1	7,467,000	8.5	-4
Burglary	4,713,000	5.3	4,792,000	5.5	-3
Motor vehicle theft	1,201,000	1.4	1,202,000	1.4	-1
Crimes of high concern (a rape, robbery, or assault by a stranger, or a burglary)	6,876,000	7.7	7,063,000	8.0	-4

Note: Detail does not add to total because of overlap in households touched by various crimes. Relative percent change is based on unrounded figures. Estimates for 1984 differ slightly from those published in Households Touched by Crime, 1984 to correct an error in rounding of weights.

*Difference is statistically significant at the 95% level.
**Difference is statistically significant at the 90% level.

1975 and 1985, while the proportion for urban households fell by 17%.

1984-85 changes

The decrease in the percentage of households touched by any crime between 1984 and 1985 was largely caused by a decline in the percentage of households touched by personal theft (the theft of personal property from places away from the home). Apparent decreases for crimes of violence, burglary, household theft, and motor vehicle theft were not large enough to be statistically significant.

The decline in personal theft among black households was sufficient to reduce the overall percentage of black households touched by crime in 1985 (figure 2). A similar but smaller decline caused only a marginal decline in the percentage of white households touched by crime.

Households in urban and rural areas were relatively freer from crime in 1985 than in 1984 (figure 3). The change for rural households reflected the decrease in crimes of personal theft; the percentage of urban households touched by crime fell because relatively fewer were touched by "crimes of high concern" (violent crime—rape, robbery or assault—committed by strangers, or household burglary), although there was some indication that the percentage of urban households touched by theft (personal and household) decreased as well.

The proportion of suburban households touched by crime was unchanged in 1985, although there was some indication that relatively fewer suburban households were touched by crimes of personal theft.

Only households with incomes of $15,000 or more experienced a reduction in the percentage touched by crime; this was due to a drop in the percentage touched by personal theft.

Single-person households were burglarized less frequently in 1985 than in 1984, and there is some indication that relatively fewer single-person households were victims of crimes of high concern in 1985 as well. The decrease in the percentage of two- to three-person households touched by a crime of theft was large enough to cause a marginal decrease in the overall percentage of these households touched by crime.

Race of household

Although in previous years a significantly higher percentage of black households than white households had been touched by crime, in 1985 the percentage of black households touched by crime was only marginally higher than the percentage of white households touched by crime (table 3).[1]

[1] For this analysis, the race of the household is considered to be that of the household head.

Households touched by selected crimes, by race of household head, 1975-85

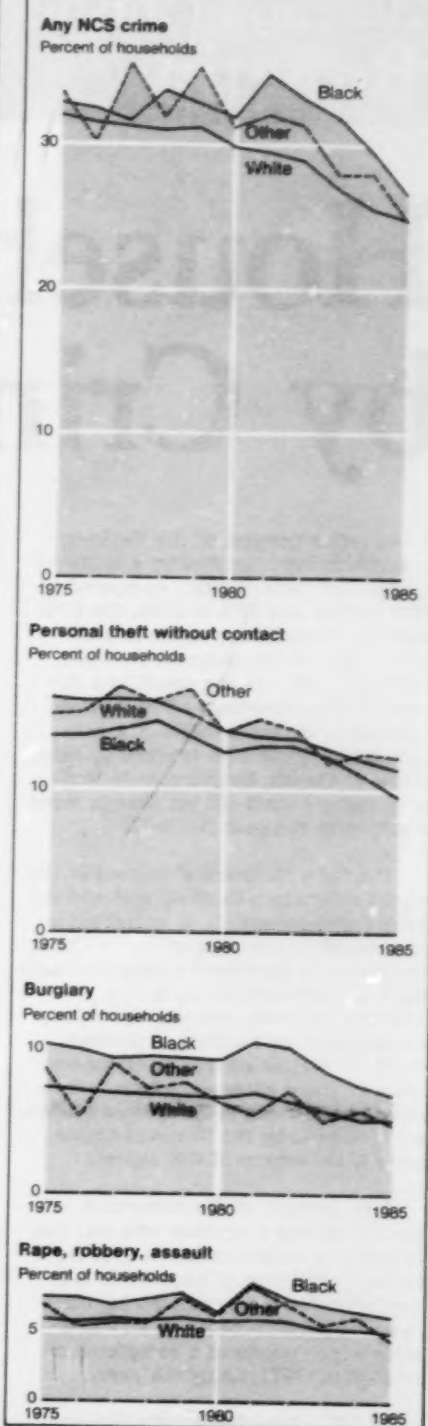


Figure 2

Black households continued to be more vulnerable than white households to violent crime (6% vs. 5%), burglary (7% vs. 5%), and household theft—theft occurring in or around the home (9% vs.

Table 2. Number and percent distribution of households touched by crime, by type of crime, 1975-85

Percent of households touched by:	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Any NCS crime	32.0%	31.5%	31.3%	31.3%	31.3%	30.0%	30.0%	29.3%	27.4%	26.0%	25.0%
Violent crime	5.8	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.9	5.5	5.9	5.6	5.1	5.0	4.8
Rape	.2	.2	.2	.2	.2	.2	.2	.2	.1	.2	.1
Robbery	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.1	1.0	.9
Assault	4.5	4.4	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.4	4.7	4.5	4.2	4.1	3.9
Personal theft	16.4	16.2	16.3	16.2	15.4	14.2	13.9	13.9	13.0	12.3	11.5
Household theft	10.2	10.3	10.2	9.9	10.8	10.4	10.2	9.6	8.9	8.5	8.1
Burglary	7.7	7.4	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.0	7.4	6.9	6.1	5.5	5.3
Motor vehicle theft	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4
Households touched by crime (in millions)	23.377	23.504	23.741	24.277	24.730	24.222	24.863	24.939	23.621	22.806	22.191
Households in U.S. (in millions)	73.123	74.528	75.904	77.578	78.964	80.622	82.797	85.178	86.146	87.791	88.852

Note: Detail does not add to total because of overlap in households touched by various crimes. Estimates for 1984 of the number of households differ slightly from previously published estimates to correct an error in rounding of weights.

Table 3. Percent of households touched by crime by selected characteristics, 1985

Percent of households touched by:	Race of household head			Annual family income				Place of residence		
				Low	Medium		High			
	White	Black	Other	Under $7,500	$7,500-$14,999	$15,000-$24,999	$25,000 or more	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Any NCS crime	24.8%	26.5%	24.7%	22.9%	24.2%	24.6%	29.1%	29.6%	25.8%	19.5%
Violent crime	4.6	5.8	4.2	5.9	4.7	4.5	4.8	6.0	4.8	3.6
Rape	.1	.2	.2	.3	.1	.1	.1	.2	.1	.1
Robbery	.8	2.0	1.2	1.2	1.0	.8	.9	1.7	.9	.3
Assault	3.9	4.0	3.0	4.9	3.7	3.8	4.1	4.5	4.0	3.3
Aggravated	1.4	1.8	1.1	2.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.2
Simple	2.8	2.5	2.1	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.9	3.2	2.8	2.3
Total theft	17.7	17.2	17.8	14.0	16.9	17.8	21.8	20.2	18.9	13.6
Personal theft	11.7	10.0	13.0	6.1	10.3	11.3	15.5	12.9	12.7	8.6
Household theft	8.0	9.4	6.6	8.1	8.5	8.4	8.6	10.1	8.2	6.3
Burglary	5.1	6.9	4.7	7.0	5.5	4.8	5.1	6.8	4.9	4.4
Motor vehicle theft	1.3	1.9	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.4	1.7	1.9	1.4	.7
Serious violent crime[a]	2.2	3.8	2.4	3.3	2.3	2.1	2.3	3.3	2.4	1.5
Crimes of high concern[b]	7.5	9.8	7.5	9.4	7.7	7.3	7.9	10.1	7.5	5.9

Note: Detail does not add to total because of overlap in households touched by various crimes.

[a]Rape, robbery, aggravated assault.
[b]A rape, robbery, or assault by a stranger or a burglary.

Households touched by selected crimes, by place of residence, 1975-85

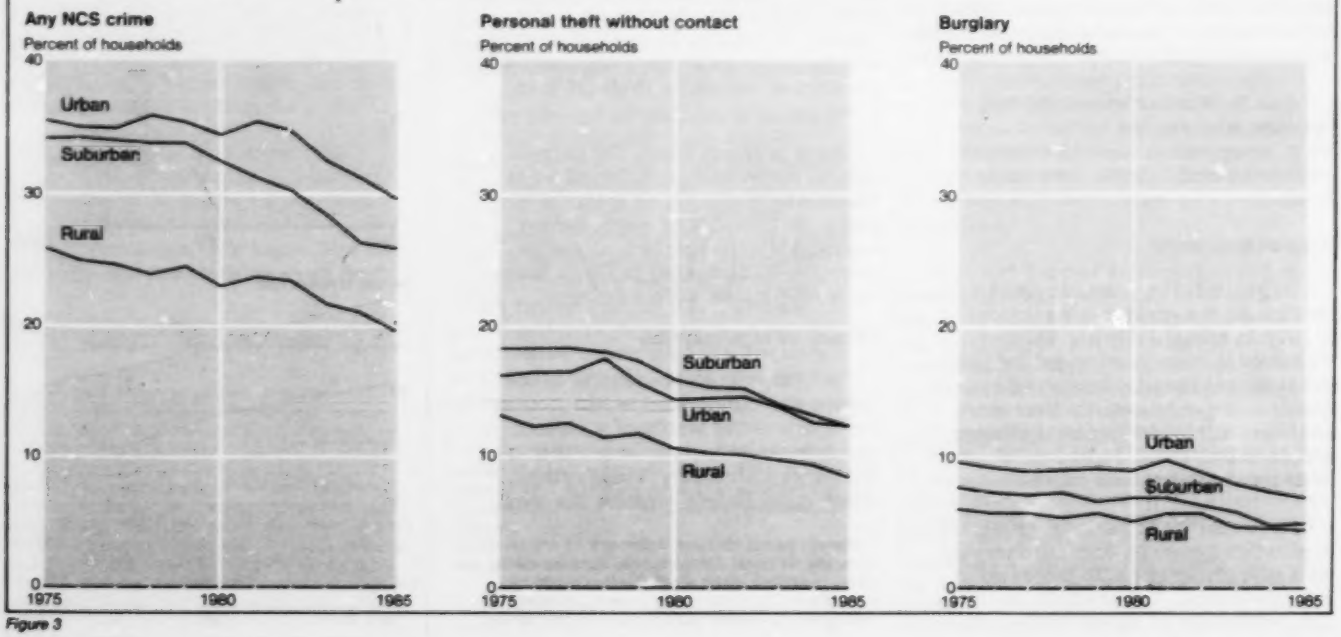


Figure 3

8%). White households were more susceptible than black households to personal theft (12% vs. 10%).

Twenty-five percent of households headed by members of minority races other than black (Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans) were touched by crime in 1985. Because of the small size of these minority populations the decrease from 28% in 1984 was not large enough to be statistically significant.

Family income

Households with higher incomes had greater vulnerability to crime victimization than those with lower incomes, almost entirely because of their greater vulnerability to crimes of personal theft. The percentage of households with incomes of $25,000 and over touched by personal theft was almost twice that of households with incomes under $7,500. Despite differential risk for personal theft, households at all income levels appeared equally susceptible to household theft.

Households with incomes below $7,500 experienced violent crimes and burglaries to a greater degree than did households in higher income categories.

Place of residence

Households in urban areas were the most susceptible to criminal victimization; those in rural areas, the least susceptible. The percentage of suburban households touched by crime fell between urban and rural households for every type of crime measured except personal theft without contact. This crime touched urban and suburban households equally (12%).

One in 60 urban households had a member who was the victim of a robbery, compared to 1 in 112 suburban households and 1 in 295 rural households.

Size of household

In general, the more people in a household, the greater is its vulnerability to crime (table 4). This tendency is more pronounced for personal crimes than for household crimes, because larger households have more members at risk for personal crimes; but each household, regardless of size, is at risk for household crimes.

Vulnerability to personal crime victimization generally does not increase at a rate proportional to increases in household size. For example, in 1985, the percentage of six-or-more-person households touched by personal theft was only about three times that of one-person households.

Table 4. Percent of households touched by selected crimes, by size of household, 1985

Percent of households touched by:	Number of persons in household			
	1	2-3	4-5	6+
Any NCS crime	17.6%	24.1%	32.9%	38.6%
Violent crime	3.0	4.3	6.8	10.7
Total theft	11.2	17.1	24.5	27.6
Personal theft	6.7	11.1	16.7	18.6
Household theft	5.8	7.9	10.6	13.0
Burglary	4.6	5.1	6.2	7.0
Motor vehicle theft	.8	1.4	1.8	1.6

One reason why personal crime victimization is not simply proportional to household size is that many households with 2 or more members include children under 12 years of age. Crimes against such young children are not included in the measurement of households touched by crime.[2] In addition, differences in demographic characteristics and lifestyles among different size households will affect the degree to which they are touched by crime, because both are related to crime vulnerability.

The relationship between household size and vulnerability to crime shown in 1984 also held for 1985:

- Fewer than 1 in 5 single-person households were touched by crime in 1985, compared to almost 2 in 5 households with six or more people.
- Households with six or more members were more than three times more likely than single-person households to be touched by violent crime (11% vs. 3%), and 2½ times as likely to be touched by personal or household theft (28% vs. 11%).

As in previous years, the percentages of households of different sizes touched by crime varied least for burglary. In 1985, 5% of single-person households were burglarized one or more times, compared to 7% of households with six or more members.

Crimes of high concern

In 1985, 1 in 13 households in the Nation was burglarized or had a member who was the victim of a violent crime (rape, robbery or assault) committed by a stranger. These crimes, which many people consider the most threatening, have been designated "crimes of high concern" in this report.

In 1985 as in previous years, black, low-income, and urban households were the most likely to be victims of crimes of high concern.

From 1981, when 10.5% of all households were touched by a crime of high concern, to 1984 the percentage of households touched by such crimes has decreased steadily. It was unchanged between 1984 and 1985. The decrease was relatively greater for black households and urban households than for white households or households in suburban and rural areas (figure 4).

Comparison to other life events

Crime vulnerability can be placed in perspective by comparing it with vulnerability to other adverse occurrences, such as motor vehicle accidents and residential fires. Crime victimization, accidents, and fires share a number of similarities in terms of their impact on households. They all occur without prior warning, they can affect a house-

Households touched by crimes of high concern, by race of household head and place of residence, 1981-85:

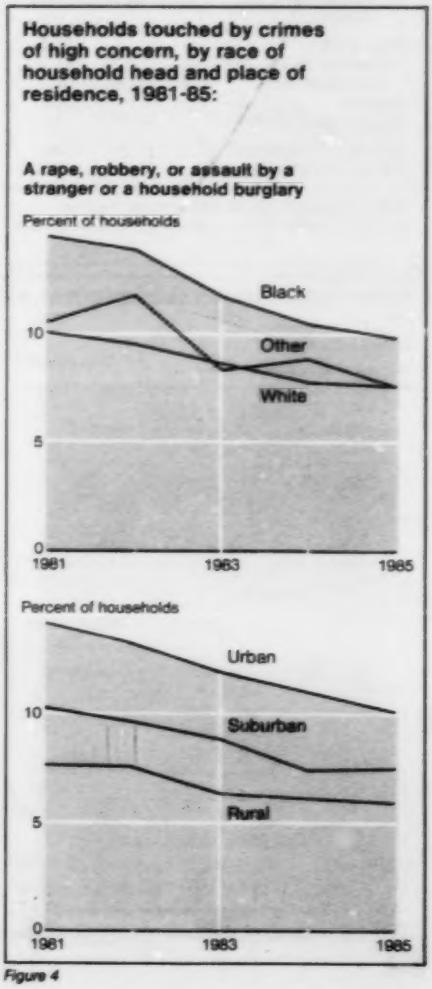


Figure 4

[2] Crimes against children under age 12 are excluded from the National Crime Survey because asking sensitive questions about victimization might be stressful to the child or the parents, possibly discouraging the adults' participation in the survey.

hold in ways ranging from trivial to tragic, and they can cause both physical and economic injury.

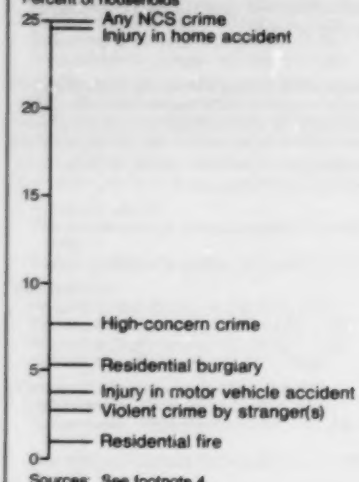
Criminal victimization is one of the few adverse life experiences for which a household-based measure is available.[3] Most other experiences are measured as counts of incidents or events without regard to the number of households affected.

To compare household vulnerability to criminal victimization with the risk of other negative occurrences, rough estimates of the greatest possible number of households that could have been touched by the life event were created by counting each incidence of an experience as if it happened to a different household.

Comparison of these estimates shows that crime victimization is among the most common negative life events that confront households (figure 5). At least as many households are touched by crime in a year as have members who are injured in an accident in the home.

Households with a member who was victimized during the year in a violent crime committed by a stranger are about as common as households with a member who was injured during the year in a motor vehicle accident. More households are burglarized each year than experience residential fires.[4]

Households touched by selected negative life events in a year



Sources: See footnote 4.

Figure 5

Factors affecting trends

As discussed in previous reports, changes in American society can have an effect on the percentage of households touched by crime. How Americans live affect these estimates because they influence how crime is distributed across society.

American society is extremely mobile. People are constantly moving into and out of different households, creating new households, and merging existing households. For some time the population has been moving away from urban areas into suburban and rural areas. Between 1975 and 1985 the percentage of households located in urban areas fell from 32% to 29% of all households, while suburban and rural households increased from 68% to 71% of all American households.

During the 1975-85 period, the average American household decreased in size. One-person households represented 21% of all households in 1975, but 24% in 1985. The percent of households containing six or more people fell from 7% to 4% during this period.

These movements shift population from households more vulnerable to crime—larger ones and those in urban areas—to those less vulnerable—smaller ones and suburban or rural ones.

The percent of households touched by crime is probably lower than it would have been had these population shifts not occurred. For example, if the size distribution of American households were the same in 1985 as in 1975, then the percent of households touched by crime would have been 25.8% rather than 25.0%.[5] The adjusted estimate, however, is still significantly below the 1975 estimate of 32.0% of households touched by crime.

Methodology

The households-touched-by-crime indicator was developed by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in 1981 to improve our understanding of the impact of crime on our society.[6] The household was chosen as a unit of analysis because crimes such as burglary are crimes against an entire household and crimes against persons affect not only the victim but also members of the victim's household.

Households-touched-by-crime estimates are derived from National Crime Survey (NCS) statistics on rape, personal robbery, assault, household burglary, personal and household theft, and motor vehicle theft.[7] Because the NCS counts only crimes for which the victim can be interviewed, homicide is not counted. Its exclusion does not noticeably affect the estimates. If each of the homicides during 1985 had touched a different household and if these households had been touched by no other crime (the largest possible effect), then the inclusion of homicides in these findings would not have raised the overall percentage of households touched by crime (25.0%) by as much as 0.05%.[8]

Other crimes against persons or their households—such as fraud, confidence games, kidnaping, and arson—are not included in this analysis because they are not measured by the National Crime Survey.

Traditional measures of crime are in the form of volumes or rates. Data on the volume of crime have limited usefulness because the size of the population is not taken into account. Rates—expressed in the National Crime Survey as crimes per 1,000 households or per 1,000 persons—automatically correct for different population sizes, but they do not show whether a given amount of crime is widely spread or highly concentrated within a limited population.

For each type of crime examined, a household is counted only once regardless of how many times that household was victimized. For example, if a household was burglarized twice and one of its members robbed once during

[3] See Households Touched by Crime, 1981, Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin, NCJ-84406, September 1982.

[4] Data on accidents were drawn from National Health Interview Survey: United States, 1982, Series 10, No. 150, September 1985, National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Public Health Service, Washington, D.C., table 52, p. 71. The source of fire incidence data was the 1984 Fire Almanac, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, Mass., 1983. Estimates of households with members experiencing accidents include accidents to all household members. The estimates are somewhat higher than they would have been had the estimates been restricted to accidents to persons age 12 and older, as are victimization estimates.

[5] For this analysis it was assumed that for each household size the percent of households touched by crime in 1985 would not have been affected had the size distribution for all households remained unchanged.

[6] The Prevalence of Crime, Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin, NCJ-75905, March 1981.

[7] These crimes are defined in Measuring Crime, BJS Bulletin, NCJ-75710, February 1981. As used in this report the term "theft" is synonymous with the term "larceny" used in previous reports.

[8] Preliminary estimates for 1985 indicate that homicides increased by 1% from the 18,692 that occurred in 1984. (Uniform Crime Reports, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1985)

the year, it is counted once for households touched by burglary even though it was victimized twice by burglary. It is also counted once for households touched by robbery. Finally, it is counted once in the overall measure, households touched by crime.

Consequently, the households-touched-by-crime estimate for 1985 (25.0%) is less than the sum of the estimates for households touched by personal crimes (15.0%) and those touched by household crimes (13.6%), because 3.6% of U.S. households were victims of both personal and household crimes. Similarly, because about 1.3% of the U.S. households were touched by both personal theft and violence, the sum of households touched by personal theft (11.5%) and those touched by violence (4.8%) exceeds the estimate of those touched by personal crime (15.0%).

All data in this bulletin are from the National Crime Survey except those specifically attributed to other sources. The NCS is an ongoing survey conducted for the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Interviews are conducted at 6-month intervals with all occupants age 12 and over in about 49,000 housing units (101,000 persons). Because the NCS does not obtain information about crimes against persons under age 12, households experiencing only these crimes are not included in the estimate of households touched by crime.

The estimates in this bulletin are derived from sample survey data and they are subject to sampling variation.[9] Because the procedure used to produce estimates of households touched by crime differs from that for victimization rates, the households-touched data have standard errors about 8% higher than those for victimization rates with the same population bases even though they are derived from the same sample survey.

Comparisons presented in this report were determined to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, meaning that the estimated difference is greater than twice the standard error. Statements of comparison qualified by language such as "marginally," "some evidence," or "some indication" indicate statistical significance at the 90% level (1.6 standard errors).

[9]Details of the NCS sample design, the standard error computation, and the customary estimation procedure for victimization rates and counts may be found in appendix III of the BJS report Criminal Victimization in the United States, 1984, NCJ-100435, May 1986.

The estimates are also subject to response errors, including crimes that are forgotten or withheld from the interviewer. Such response errors tend to cause understated counts of households touched by crime.[10]

[10]A more detailed description of the procedures used to estimate households touched by crime appears in an unpublished memorandum prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The memorandum is available on request from the author at BJS.

Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletins are prepared principally by the staff of BJS. This bulletin was written by Michael R. Rand. Statistical assistance was provided by Anita Timrots and Gertrude Thomas. Carol B. Kalish, chief of data analysis, edits the bulletins. Marilyn Marbrook, publications manager, administers production, assisted by Tina Dorsey, Joyce M. Stanford, and Millie J. Baldea.

June 1986, NCJ-101685

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